



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



114TH FIGHTER WING EARNS TOP MARKS DURING INSPECTION

The South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing earned Air Combat Command's first overall "highly effective" grade during a recent Unit Effectiveness Inspection at Joe Foss Field, June 19-23.

The UEI is part of the newly implemented Air Force Inspection System, aimed at giving wing commanders more power to self-assess their unit's effectiveness. The five-day UEI event is intended to validate and verify the commander's program.

"Our ultimate goal is to be in a continuous, steady state of operation and improvement," said Col. Russ Walz, 114th commander. "Inspections are continuously done by our own wing inspection staff. Periodically, ACC will stop in and validate our programs."

Air Combat Command sent 57 inspectors from across the Air Force to evaluate four major graded areas of importance: managing resources, leading people, improving the unit and executing the mission. In addition to the unit receiving an overall UEI grade, individuals and teams from the 114th also received recognition for superior performance.

The 114th netted 57 individual superior performers and seven superior performance teams.

"I couldn't be any more proud of our Airmen," said Walz. "To be the first ACC active

duty, Guard or Reserve unit to receive a 'highly effective' rating certainly reflects the professional force that we have in the unit."

This most recent inspection confirmed that the members of the South Dakota Air National Guard continue their heritage of excellence in serving the state and nation.



Inside this issue:

VABHCS Brown Bag Lunch	2
SDNG/Suriname State Partnerships	3
MJF State Veterans Home	4
211	4
Traveling Vietnam Veterans Wall	5
Spink County Survivors Luncheon	5
VA Transportation Grant	6-7
Upcoming Events	8

Heroes Among Us—
showcasing 125 South Dakota
veterans.



VABHHCS TO HOST BROWN BAG LUNCHES

The VABHHCS will be hosting two Brown Bag Presentations (BBP) in July and August. On July 17 (Noon MT) the presentation will be Pain Management with Dr. Peterson and on August 21 (Noon MT) Kim Wright will address TBI/SCI.

V-Tel locations are noted on the poster.

VA Black Hills Health Care System
Presents: Brown Bag Series
July and August 2014

YOU ARE INVITED TO:

Chronic Pain Management

with Guest Speaker

Dr. Ken Peterson

VA Blackhills Healthcare System—**July 17, 2014 @ 12:00pm (MT)**

AND

Traumatic Brain Injury/ Spinal Cord Injury

with Guest Speaker

Kim Wright

VA Blackhills Healthcare System—**August 21, 2014 @ 12:00pm (MT)**

Fort Meade: Building 145, Room 108

Hot Springs: Building 53, Room 102

Rapid City CBOC: Room 205

Pierre CBOC: Large Room



SD GUARD SHARES KNOWLEDGE WITH SURINAME MILITARY ON RESERVE FORCE OPERATIONS

The South Dakota National Guard hosted three key leaders from the Suriname Armed Forces at Camp Rapid, July 10-14, to share information on the structure and operational processes of the National Guard as a reserve force.

The purpose of the Surinamers' visit was to research how to implement a reserve military force in their home country. The subject matter expert exchange between the SDNG and Suriname was conducted as part of the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program in coordination with U.S. Southern Command.

Currently, there is no reserve force in Suriname, but leaders of the South American nation are interested in standing up a company-sized unit of approximately 100 reservists in the next few years to help relieve the workload of its active army soldiers.

"They are taking steps in using their scarce resources in the best possible way, and having a professional reserve force is one way to reduce cost," said Lt. Col. Orson Ward, SDNG State Partnership Program director. "A reserve force is cost effective, but they are also looking at the reserve force possibly having specific missions that would allow the full-time force to focus in on other areas."

During their visit, the Suriname military leaders learned about the SDNG's force structure and how the organization works from top to bottom. The primary focus of the visit was directed toward discussing personnel issues and recruiting, while also looking at operations and training. The Suriname soldiers also spent time with logistics personnel and with special staff, including the staff judge advocate, chaplain and safety officers.

The Surinamers visited with members from the SDNG's Joint Force Headquarters and the 109th Regional Support Group, both based in Rapid City. They also had the opportunity to visit with Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG, on his leadership priorities and perspective of the National Guard.

"We enjoy helping people, especially our partner nation, and if the information we provided makes their organization better then it is personally and professionally rewarding," said Ward.

The partnership between the SDNG and Suriname was formally initiated in August 2006 to develop a mutually beneficial, long-term security cooperation relationship between the two partners. South Dakota was selected to be Suriname's partner based upon similarities in culture, population size, land mass and agricultural-based economies.

Over the last eight years, the two entities have conducted nearly 100 exchanges to help promote response capacity for natural disasters and providing humanitarian relief, building partnership capacity for peacekeeping operations, enhancing regional access and advancing security sector reform.

"By having partnerships with countries across the world – like the one the South Dakota National Guard has with Suriname – it supports overall global stability and security," said Ward. "If the information we provided on how a reserve force works and operates helps Suriname military leaders in establishing their own reserve force, then that is not only going to benefit the stability and security of their country, but the region as well, and that is what the State Partnership Program is all about."



SUMMER FUN AT THE STATE VETERANS HOME

So far it has been a wonderful summer and the residents have been enjoying a lot of outdoor activities—fishing, pontoon rides, picnics, cookouts, golfing, trapshooting and plays at the Black Hills Playhouse.

The garden and the flowers are looking great and all the weeds are being pulled daily!

As always, the coffee pot is always on and all visitors are welcome to join in on a good card game, a great visit and a tour of our construction project. We encourage you to watch as progress continues — <http://www.truelook.com/clients/scullconstruction-webcam3/>



COURAGE TO CALL

Courage to Call provides free, confidential information, support and referrals to military members and their families in Sioux Falls.



DIAL 2-1-1



- Financial Assistance
- Family Conflicts
- Housing
- Crisis Support
- Addictions
- Education
- Benefits

Search online for resources
helplinecenter.org

helpline
center

211 Offers Military Families Hope, Help

The Helpline Center stands ready to help Sioux Falls area service members, Veterans and their families when they have simple questions, or when they need serious help, through its Military and Family Support Program.

The Military and Family Support program connects those who have sacrificed for our country with the help they deserve through its 211 phoneline, answered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Help and Hope are just three simple numbers away.

The Helpline Center also provides an online database of resources for its Military and Family Support program. Visit helplinecenter.org to find specific military resources, military discounts at local stores, an events calendar, educational information and much more.

TRAVELING VIETNAM VETERANS WALL COMING TO SD

The traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall will be arriving in Hot Springs July 30 and will be on display that week. This Traveling Memorial stands as a reminder of the great sacrifices made during the Vietnam War. It was made for the purpose of helping heal and rekindle friendships and to allow people the opportunity to visit loved ones in their home town who otherwise may not be able to make the trip to Washington.

For those individuals that are unable to make the trip to Hot Springs here are a couple of links to view South Dakota heroes.

First, go to: <http://www.virtualwall.org/iStates.htm>. Click on South Dakota. When it opens, scroll down to the city and the names will appear. Then click on their names. It should show you a picture of the person, or at least their bio and medals.

Second, click on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLsKB3yxyUg> and hear the names of South Dakota's Vietnam Fallen Heroes announced by the Pierre Riggs High School students.

SPINK COUNTY HOSTS SURVIVORS BENEFITS LUNCHEON



Gordon Richard, Spink County Veterans Service Officer, finds yet another unique opportunity to provide education on veterans benefits.

This week he hosted a Survivors Benefit Luncheon in Redfield.

Steve Oliva, program manager for the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs addressed the group and provided information on burial flags, VA burial benefits, headstones and markers, survivors pension, DIC, and survivor's education assistance.

Oliva commends Richard for his efforts to reach all of his veterans and

their families. "This event, is a shining example of Gordon's commitment to his veterans and their families," said Oliva. "His commitment to outreach is exemplary!"

IT'S ALL ABOUT TEAMWORK AND PARTNERSHIPS

Working together, Sheila Carpenter (Veterans Service Officer Assistant for Hughes, Stanley and Sully Counties) and Royce Loesch (American Legion Post 20 Commander) have secured a \$49,764

veterans transportation grant. The grant secured is from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs Transportation Program.

The grant has been awarded to American Legion Post 20 in Fort Pierre for transportation for veterans in need of healthcare. The grant can only be used for veterans in Stanley County (a county designated as highly rural).

Veterans in Stanley County need to work with American Legion Commander Loesch in order to obtain free transportation to and from their medical visits. River City Public Transit will transport the veteran and Post 20, via their grant, will reimburse River City for the travel expense.

Stanley County Veterans must have a scheduled appointment and must complete an application to ensure they are eligible to use this service. Applications can be secured from Loesch at 122 E. Sioux Avenue.

If you have any questions regarding this program/service, please give Royce a call at 605-224-1231 or 605-224-4512.



VA TRANSPORTATION GRANTS

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the White House Rural Council have award eight grants, totaling \$815,051.50, which they hope will improve access to health care for veterans living in highly rural areas. The grants should assist over 11,000 veterans in seven states and 56 counties by providing up to \$50,000 per highly rural area to fund transportation services for veterans to and from VA medical centers and other facilities that provide VA care.

The grants are part of a program authorized by Congress to help state Veterans Service Agencies (SVSAs) and Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) operate or contract for transportation services to transport veterans to VA medical centers and other facilities that provide VA care.

In July 2013, the VA began accepting applications for grants to help state Veterans Service Agencies and VSOs operate or contract for transportation services to transport veterans to VA medical centers and other facilities that provide VA care. A new regulation establishes the program that will administer these grants. Transportation will be provided at no cost to veterans.

"The VA is committed to ensuring that all Veterans, including those who live in rural and remote areas, have access to the health care they have earned through service to our country," said Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs Sloan D. Gibson. "These grants will play a critical role in expanding access to VA healthcare for Veterans."

Organizations awarded the grants include:

Virginia Department of Veteran Services (\$8,825.00 for one county in Virginia)
approximately benefiting over 89 veterans

American Legion Post 20 (\$49,764.00 for one county in South Dakota)
approximately benefiting 1,507 veterans

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8988 (\$80,000.00 for two counties in California)
approximately benefiting 849 veterans

Nevada Department of Veteran Affairs (\$46,850.00 for one county in Nevada)
approximately benefiting 1,285 veterans;

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7202 (\$150,000.00 for 13 counties in far west Texas)
approximately benefiting 1,579 veterans

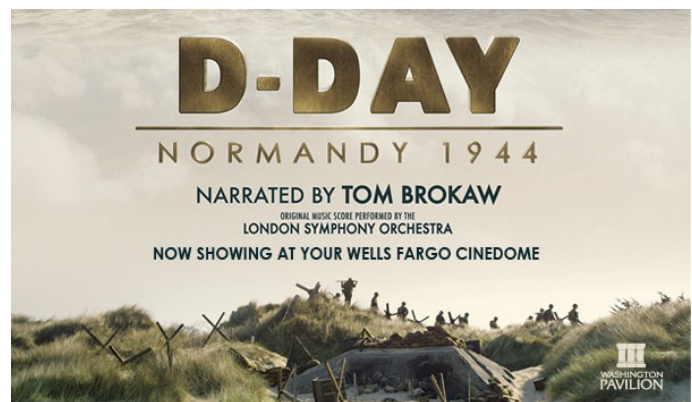
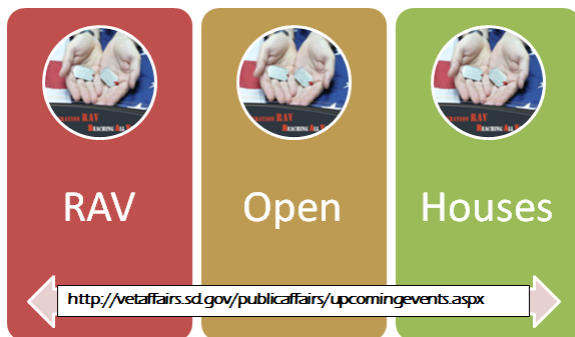
Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (\$100,000.00 for two counties)
approximately benefiting 1,756 veterans

North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (\$379,612.50 for 36 counties in North Dakota)
approximately benefiting 5,477 veterans

Upcoming Events

2014

Aug. 6—DOL Veterans/Guardsmen/Reservists/Spouses Job Fair—Augustana College Elmen Center—10:00 am—2:00 pm
 Aug. 20—Annual SFVAHCS Show and Shine
 Aug. 22—SFVAHCS Stand Down—Sioux City, IA
 Aug. 25-29—NACVSO Training Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
 Aug. 30— 727th DAV 10th Annual Charity Poker Run—Brookings—10:00 am
 Sept. 5—SFVAHCS Stand Down—Watertown
 Sept. 11—SFVAHCS Stand Down—Wagner
 Sept. 19—SFVAHCS Stand Down—Sioux Falls
 Oct. 6—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—BHNC—9:00 am



Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
 South Dakota Department of the Military <http://mva.sd.gov>
 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <http://vetaffairs.sd.gov>
 Soldiers and Sailors Building
 425 E Capitol Avenue
 Pierre, SD 57501
 Phone: 605-773-8242
 E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us

